Accommodations Toolkit

Student Reads Aloud to Self: States' Accessibility Policies, 2023

This summary of states' accessibility policies for **student reads aloud to self** is part of the *Accommodations Toolkit* published by the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO).[1] The toolkit also contains a summary of the research literature on read aloud to self (/nceo/accommodations-toolkit/student-reads-aloud-to-self-research).

Accessibility policies often have several tiers of accessibility features: universal features, designated features, and accommodations.[2]. Figure 1 summarizes how states included student reads aloud to self in their accessibility policies for students with disabilities in 2023. Figure 2 summarizes how states included student reads aloud to self in their accessibility policies for English learners in 2023. Table 1 shows how student reads aloud to self was included in the policies, while Table 2 contains additional details and specifications.

Figure 1. States' Accessibility Policies for Student Reads Aloud to Self for Students with Disabilities, 2023

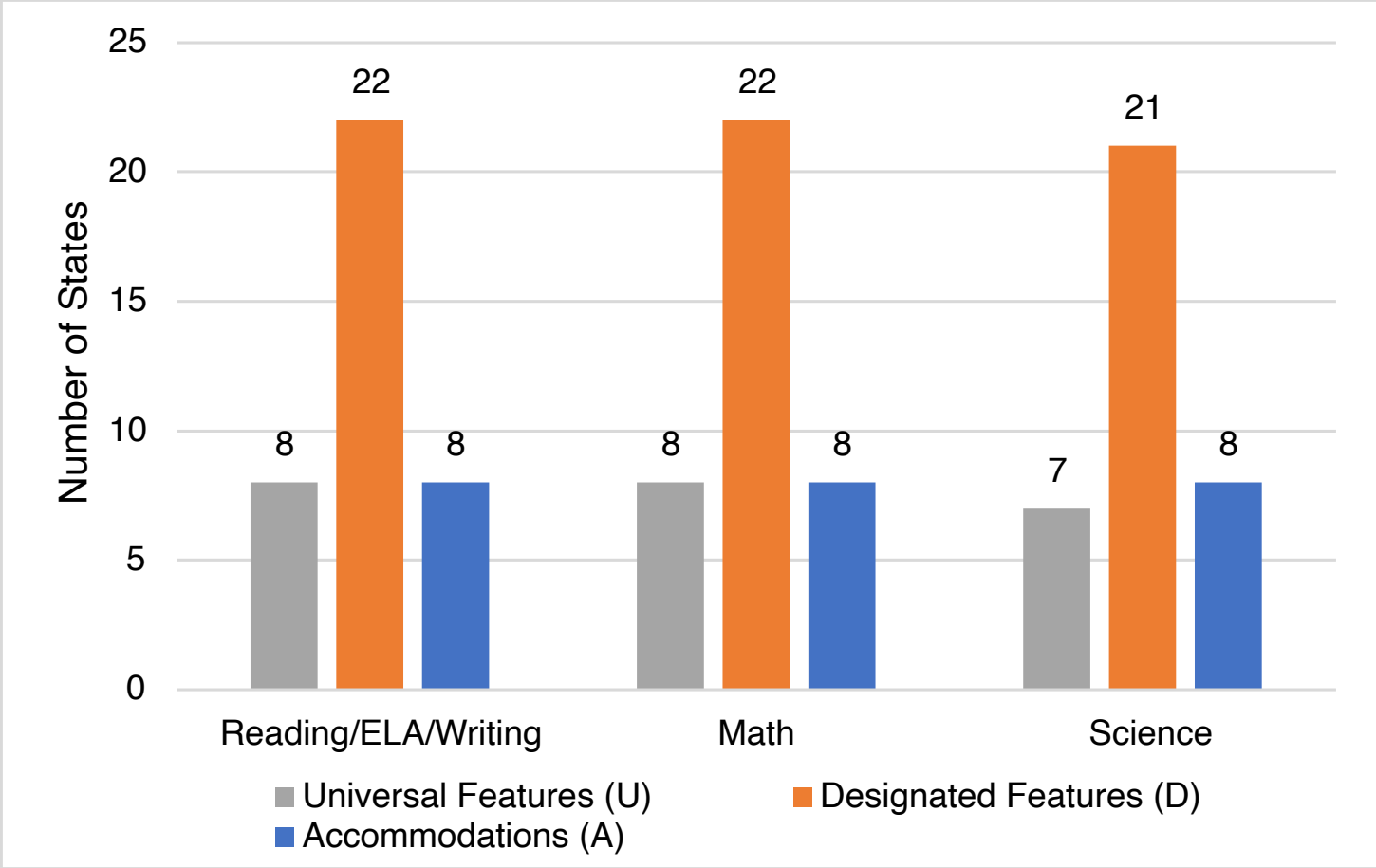

Figure 2. States' Accessibility Policies for Student Reads Aloud to Self for English Learners, 2023

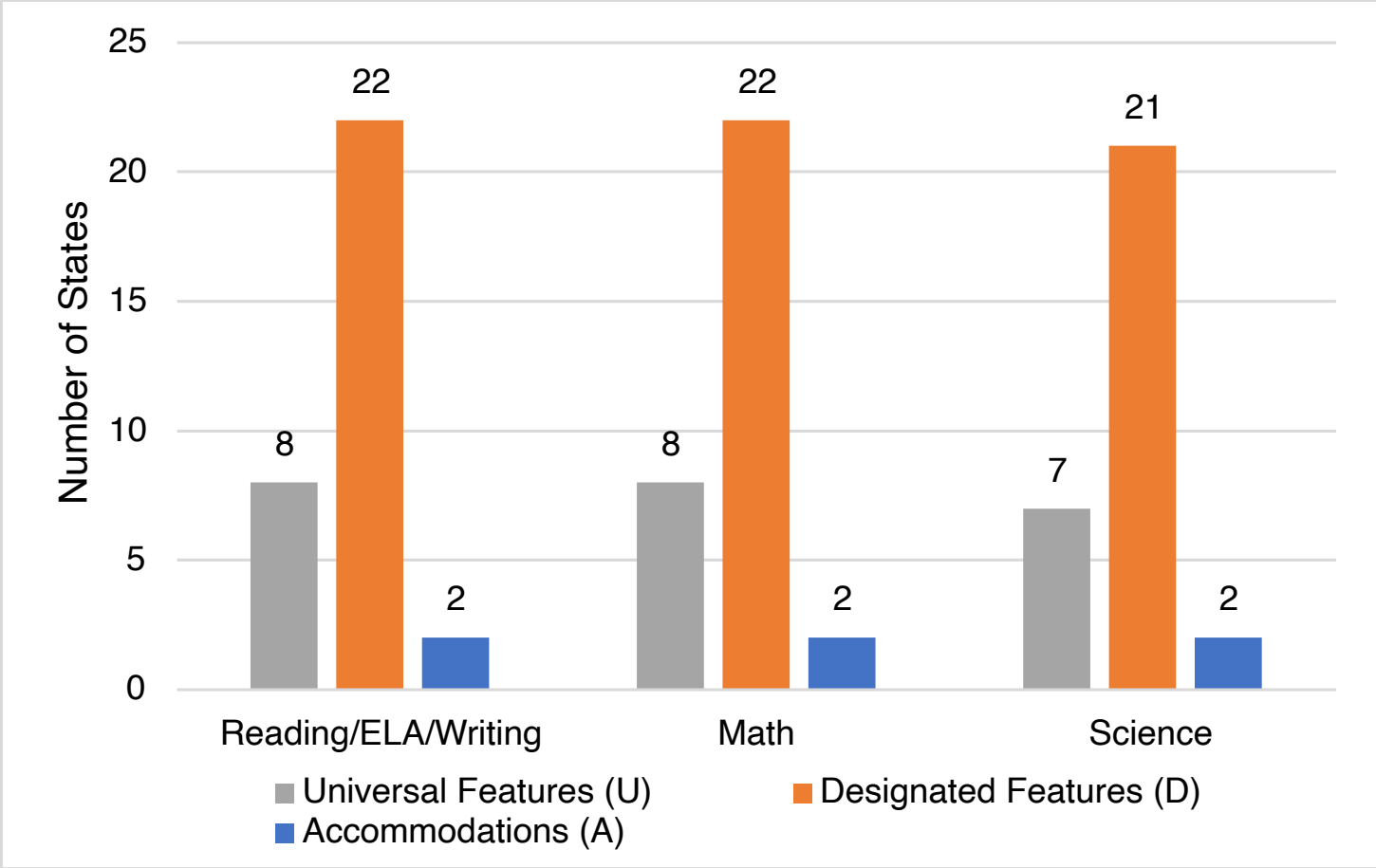

Table 1. Accommodations Policies for Student Reads Aloud to Self by State, 2020

U = Universal Feature, D = Designated Feature, A = Accommodation, ELA = English Language Arts, X = Allowed, SD =

State	Reading/ELA/Writing			Math	
	U	D	A	U	
Alabama		X			X
Alaska					
Arizona	X			X	
Arkansas					
California					
Colorado	X			X	
Connecticut					
Delaware					
District of Columbia		X			X

Florida			SD		
Georgia					
Hawaii		X			X
Idaho		X			X
Illinois		X			X
Indiana	X		SD	X	
Iowa		X			X
Kansas					
Kentucky					
Louisiana		X			X
Maine		X			X
Maryland		X			X
Massachusetts		X			X
Michigan					

Minnesota	X			X	
Mississippi		X			X
Missouri	X			X	
Montana		X			X
Nebraska	X			X	
Nevada		X			X
New Hampshire		X			X
New Jersey		X			X
New Mexico	X			X	
New York			SD		
North Carolina			SD		
North Dakota		X			X
Ohio		X			X

Oklahoma			SD, E		
Oregon			SD		
Pennsylvania			SD, E		
Rhode Island		X			X
South Carolina			SD		
South Dakota		X			X
Tennessee		X			X
Texas	X			X	
Utah					
Vermont					
Virginia					
Washington		X			X
West Virginia					

Wisconsin					
Wyoming		X			X
Total (Students with Disabilities)	8	22	8	8	1
Total (English Learners)	8	22	2	8	1

Note: Blank cell = no policy found

Table 2. Details and Specifications: States' Student Reads Aloud to Self Accessibility Policies

State	Details/Specifications
Alabama	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Oral reader: The student reads the test content aloud to him- or herself. This support must be administered in an individual setting. This accessibility support requires a Test Administrator and a Proctor in the room at all times. Set up: The student, the Test Administrator, and the Proctor are set up in a room separate from other students. Unless there are additional supports or accommodations that apply, the administration of the test will follow the same guidelines as those for group online testing. The tests are timed. Breaks are limited to 10 minutes, and the timer does not stop. The student must complete a given session in a single day.
Arizona	**Universal Test Administration Condition (Universal Feature):** Reading the test quietly to themselves as long as other students are not disrupted.
Colorado	**Accessibility Feature (Universal Feature):** Read aloud to self: A student may read the assessment aloud to him/herself. Devices, such as "whisper phones" are allowed. This accessibility feature requires the student to test in a one-on-one environment separate from other students.
District of Columbia	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Student reads assessment aloud to self: The student reads aloud the assessment to him or herself. Students may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting. The student's SR/PNP must have this feature identified.
Florida	**Accommodation:** A student may read aloud directions, passages, prompts, items, and answer choices to himself/herself. This would require use of a device such as a WhisperPhone®, or would require that the student be tested in a separate setting so that other students are not disturbed.

Hawaii	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists.
Idaho	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group. The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists. Or the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the Test Administration Manual (TAM), can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.
Illinois	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Student reads assessment aloud to self: The student reads aloud the assessment to him or herself. Students may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting. The student's SR/PNP must have this feature identified.
Indiana	**Universal Feature:** Read aloud to self: The student can read aloud to themselves while accessing the online or paper assessment. **Accommodation:** Read aloud to self: Students may read aloud to themselves so they can listen to themselves as they answer the questions. They can use a device such as a whisper phone. This accommodation requires the student to be tested individually due to testing security and potential distractions.

Iowa	**Designated Feature:** Student reads test aloud: The student reads the test content aloud. This feature requires a one-on-one test setting. Students who are beginning readers, some ELs, and students who read text aloud to adopt a slower pace as they read may benefit from this feature.
Louisiana	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Student reads assessment aloud to self: The student reads aloud the assessment to themselves. The student may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting. Testing locations and logistics must be secured in advance of testing.
Maine	**Designated Feature (ELA, Math):** Student reads assessment aloud to self in individual setting.
Maryland	**Accessibility Feature for All Students Identified in Advance (Designated Feature):** Student reads content aloud to him or herself: The student reads aloud the materials to him or herself. Students may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting.
Massachusetts	**Designated Accessibility Feature Available to Any Student (Designated Feature):** Student reads test aloud to self: Student must be tested in a separate setting, unless a low-volume device (e.g., a Whisper Phone) is used.
Minnesota	**General Support Available for All Students (Universal Feature):** Voice feedback devices/whisper phones or student reading the test out loud: Voice feedback devices and whisper phones allow students to vocalize as they read and work problems. Students may not read the test aloud directly to the Test Administrator/Test Monitor, and the Test Administrator/Test Monitor cannot provide verbal or nonverbal prompts. This support must be provided in an individual setting.
Mississippi	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Student reads test aloud to self (requires #4 [Test Individually] or a Whisper Phone-type device to not distract other students).

Missouri	**Universal Feature:** Read aloud test to self: All students may read aloud the test to themselves, either in a one-on-one setting or by using a device (such as a whisper phone) that does not disturb other students or allow other students to hear what is being said. In order to ensure that use of this tool does not disturb other students, the use of this tool may need to be paired with the use of separate setting (S501).
Montana	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group. The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists. Or, the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the Test Administrator Manual (TAM), can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.
Nebraska	**Universal Feature:** Student reads test aloud: The student quietly reads the test content aloud to themselves. This feature must be administered in a setting that is not distracting to other students. With or without an acoustical voice feedback device (i.e., Whisper Phones). Recommendations for use: Students that use this during instruction while they are reading material.

Nevada	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group. The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists. Or, the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the Test Administration Manual (TAM), can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.
New Hampshire	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Recommendations for Use: Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group. The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists. Or, the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with instructional or test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A specific adult, trained in a manner consistent with the TAM, can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.
New Jersey	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Student reads assessment aloud to self: The student reads aloud the assessment to themselves. Students may use an external device such as a whisper phone, read to themselves in a normal voice, or use other strategies from classroom instruction. The student must be tested in a separate setting. The student's SR/PNP must have this feature identified.

New Mexico	**Universal Feature (ELA, Math):** Read aloud to self: Student reads aloud to themselves. Please consider the testing environment for other students by administering the test in isolation.
New York	**Accommodation:** Student reads tests aloud to self.

North Carolina	**Accommodation:** Student Reads Test Aloud to Self: The Student Reads Test Aloud to Self accommodation permits the student to read the test aloud during the test administration. To ensure the validity of the test, students who are provided the Student Reads Test Aloud to Self accommodation must also be provided the Testing in a Separate Room (one-on-one) accommodation. No other students are to be present in the room during the test administration. The Student Reads Test Aloud to Self accommodation also applies to students who routinely use a device that allows them to hear themselves read, such as a PVC elbow pipe or other device that directs the sound toward the students' ears. These students may use such a device, but they must follow the same guidelines as other students receiving this accommodation (i.e., Testing in a Separate Room, one-on-one). If the Student Reads Test Aloud accommodation is provided, the test administrator or proctor (if utilized) may not (1) correct the student who is reading aloud or (2) read all or any part of the test to the student unless the student also has the Test Read Aloud (in English) accommodation. If the test administrator (or a proctor) corrects or reads all or any part of a test that measures reading comprehension to the student, the test results are invalid. The following North Carolina tests measure reading comprehension: 1. BOG3 Reading Test 2. Read to Achieve Test 3. North Carolina EOG Reading Tests (Grades 3–8) 4. North Carolina EOC English II Test The test administrator must follow the standard procedures for processing the test materials unless the Student Reads Test Aloud to Self accommodation is used in conjunction with another accommodation that requires special storage and processing. The IEP team or Section 504 committee may wish to address the following questions when determining whether the Student Reads Test Aloud to Self accommodation is appropriate for the student: 1. Does the student routinely use the Student Reads Test Aloud to Self accommodation during classroom instruction and similar classroom tests? 2. If the student will be provided this accommodation to read the test aloud, will the student also need a device (e.g., PVC elbow pipe) that will direct the sound toward the student's ear? 3. If the student will be provided this accommodation, has the Testing in a Separate Room accommodation been discussed?

North Dakota	**Designated Feature:** Student reads test aloud: The student reads the test content aloud. This feature must be administered in a one-on-one test setting. Students who are beginning readers may need to hear themselves read aloud in order to comprehend the text. This support may also help students who tend to rush through assessments without fully reading the text.
Ohio	**Designated Feature:** Student reads test aloud to self: The student reads aloud to self. This feature includes the use of whisper phones. Student must be tested in a one-on-one setting so that the student does not disturb other students or in a setting in which students are separated enough so not to disturb others.
Oklahoma	**Accommodation (Students with Disabilities, English Learners):** Student may read the test aloud or sign the test to himself or herself. This requires individual testing (even if student is reading aloud quietly).
Oregon	**Accommodation:** Read aloud to self, use of a whisper phone, a snack or water during testing, flexible scheduling during the day, and testing blood sugar are allowed "Other" accommodations.
Pennsylvania	**Accommodation (Students with Disabilities, English Learners):** Read aloud to self (student): Student reads test aloud to self (may also use a whisper phone) and writes answers in answer booklet. Whisper phones and reading to self can be distracting to those students who are not reading aloud. An optimal testing environment for all students must be provided, therefore it is not recommended to have students read aloud to themselves in a quiet testing area with other students. Some rooms may be large enough to allow a student to use a whisper phone out of hearing-range to other testers in the room. SAC must make that determination according to the testing environment being used. All TAs must work with the SAC to provide the best testing environment for students. The online system is not interoperable with voice-to-text technology.
Rhode Island	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Read aloud to self: A student may read the assessment aloud to themselves. Test student in a separate setting unless a low-volume device is used, like a Whisper phone.

South Carolina	**Accommodation:** Student reads test aloud: The student reads the test content aloud. This feature must be administered in a one-on-one test setting. Students who are beginning readers may need to hear themselves read in order to comprehend text. Students who tend to rush through assessments and not read text fully may need to read the test aloud.
South Dakota	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or among a smaller group. The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists. Or, the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A trained (according to the Test Administration Manual – TAM) certified staff member, can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires this type of setting.
Tennessee	**Accessibility Feature (Designated Feature):** Student reads assessment aloud to self: The student reads aloud the assessment to self in a manner which will not be overheard by other students. Before testing: Test Administrator ensures student's testing environment is conducive to read aloud to self.
Texas	**Accessibility Feature (Universal Feature):** Reading the test aloud: All students who use this accessibility feature are allowed to read the test aloud to themselves to facilitate comprehension.
Vermont	Reading/ELA/Writing/Math: As part of "separate setting" designated support, the student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a whisper phone), or use amplification.
Washington	**Designated Feature:** Read aloud student: Student reads the test content out loud to themselves. Students who are beginning readers, or students who tend to rush through assessments and not read text fully, may benefit from hearing themselves read out loud in order to comprehend text.

Wyoming	**Designated Feature:** Separate setting: Test location is altered so that the student is tested in a setting different from others. Students who are easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment. The separate setting may be in a different room that allows them to work individually or may include smaller groups for WY-TOPP testers. The student may read aloud to self, use a device requiring voicing (e.g., a Whisper Phone), or use Amplification. It may also include a calming device or support as recommended by educators or specialists. Or, the separate setting may be in the same room but in a specific location (for example, away from windows, doors, or pencil sharpeners, in a study carrel, near the teacher's desk, or in the front of a classroom). Some students may benefit from being in an environment that allows for movement, such as being able to walk around. In some instances, students may need to interact with test content outside of school, such as in a hospital or their home. A trained, certified staff member can act as test proctor (test administrator) when student requires it.

Footnotes

- **[1]**
  States' accessibility policies on student reads aloud to self were obtained through the examination and analysis of publicly available information, including accommodations manuals or other policy documents, on state department of education websites. The policies were gathered from states' websites between August and September 2023.The information in the tables from each state was coded based on information in the state policy.

- **[2]**
  Universal Features are available to all students as they access instructional or assessment content. *Designated Features* are available to any student as long as an educator (or team of educators, with student and parent input) indicates that they would be helpful given the student's characteristics and needs. *Accommodations* are changes in procedures or materials to ensure equitable access to instructional and assessment content and generate valid assessment results for students who need them. Accommodations are generally available to students for whom there is documentation on an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 accommodations plan; some states also have offered accommodations to English learners.

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